

**OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES – Approved by Cumberland School  
Committee 10.23.08**

**1**

**1            STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE  
PLANTATIONS**

**2**

**3        Proceedings At:**

**4        School Committee Town of Cumberland**

**5**

**6        IN RE: School Committee Meeting**

**7            DATE: Thursday, September 25, 2008**

**TIME: 8:00 P.M.**

**8            PLACE: Cumberland High School**

**Auditorium**

**9            2600 Mendon Road**

**Cumberland, RI**

**10**

11      **School Committee Members:**

12          **Frederic C. Crowley, Chairperson**  
             **W. David Wagner, Vice Chairperson**

13          **Karen MacBeth, Clerk**  
             **Lisa Beaulieu**

14          **Donald J. Costa**  
             **Robert C. Thibodeau**

15          **Earl T. Wood**

16

**APPEARANCES:**

17

**FOR THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE:**

18

**Joseph A. Rotella, Esquire**

19

20      **ALSO PRESENT:**

21          **Donna A. Morelle, Ed.D./Superintendent**  
             **Susan C. Carney, Ph.D./Assistant**

22

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1           **(HEARING COMMENCED AT 8:05 P.M.)**

2           **MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll call the**

3           **meeting to order. It's approximately 8:05 p.m.**

4           **Mr. Costa, would you be so kind to lead us into**

5           **the Pledge of Allegiance.**

6           **(PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE)**

7           **Next item is the Approval of the**

8           **Agenda.**

**9 MR. WOOD: So moved.**

**10 MR. WAGNER: Second.**

**11 MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion? All**

**12 those in favor? Hearing none. The ayes have**

**13 it. Next is the Chairperson's Report, same old,**

**14 same old. There's a sign-up sheet at the**

**15 podium. We'll have two public comment sections**

**16 tonight. You have to limit yourselves to five**

**17 minutes. No personal attacks. This is**

**18 comments, not a question-and-answer period. If**

**19 you're going to discuss politics, please take**

**20 out an ad in the Valley Breeze, or some other**

**21 newspaper.**

22                    Now, next item is Comments from the

23       Public. May I have that, Alex, would you kindly

24       bring that forward? The first one is Brian

25       Kelly, 8 Hayfield Lane, Cumberland, Rhode

3

1       Island.

2                    MR. WOOD: I'd like to seal the

3       minutes of the executive session.

4                    MR. WAGNER: Second.

5                    MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion? All

6       those in favor? Opposed? Hearing none, the

7 ayes have it.

8 Mr. Kelly, we're going to have to

9 interrupt you for a minute. I'm going to

10 continue my Chairperson's Report. We met twice

11 last Thursday night in executive session, that

12 would be September 18, 2008, and there were no

13 votes taken at either of the executive sessions.

14 Mr. Wagner, would you care to report out on the

15 executive sessions, tonight? I think there were

16 two.

17 MR. WAGNER: Thank you,

18 Mr. Chairman. We met on the first one at 6:15

19 p.m., and there were discussions to be held with

20 regards to the Superintendent's Annual  
21 Objectives, and that was for the year 2008/2009.  
22 There were no votes taken. The second executive  
23 session was at 6:45, and that was to discuss  
24 grievance exceptions with our EXE union,  
25 grievances 1 through 5, and I believe at this

4

1 point we'll be taking no action, so there were  
2 no votes taken.

3 MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr.

4 Wagner. Any further executive sessions we have

5 to report on?

6 MR. CHAIRMAN: We're not voting on

7 the EXE grievances, Mr. Wagner?

8 MR. WAGNER: Not at this point, Mr.

9 Chairman.

10 MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kelly, you have

11 my apologies. Please start.

12 MR. KELLY: Brian Kelly. I have a

13 letter that I'll be giving to Mr. Rotella. In

14 brief, what the issue concerns is a reported

15 termination of an employee in January, and I'm

16 seeking information on votes that were taken,

17 what dates they were taken, information, who



18        made the motion to support the recommendation of  
19        the superintendant's determination and who  
20        seconded it, and how each member of the  
21        committee voted.

22                I have some concerns about whether  
23        this individual is back on the payroll of the  
24        school department, and, as you know, I'm a  
25        diligent follower of the school committee and I

1        don't recall any vote being made to the public  
2        or being reported out in session by which an

3      employee or termination has been rescinded. So  
4      I'm trying to keep the cost to a minimum. So  
5      Mr. Rotella doesn't ask for copies for minutes,  
6      but merely for reporting the dates and by virtue  
7      of his response and the Secretary of State's  
8      website and to review the minutes to at least  
9      find out the information I need. Thank you.

10                MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kelly, why don't  
11      you keep that microphone right with you, please.

12                Okay. Kathie Richard, 33 Taft  
13      Road, Cumberland, Rhode Island.

14                MS. RICHARD: Hello. I am  
15      president of the EXE Union, and I have been

16       asked to come in front of you and request that  
17       we have an extension on our contract. I'm just  
18       here on behalf of my union members.

19               MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms.  
20       Richard.

21               Next on the agenda is Reports of  
22       Standing Committees. First item is Payment of  
23       Bills. Mr. Wagner?

24               MR. WAGNER: None.

25               MR. CHAIRMAN: Next item is

**1      Discussion and/or vote to Approve Central**

**2      Administrator's Contracts. Dr. Morelle?**

**3                      MS. MORELLE: At the Personnel**

**4      Subcommittee the other evening there were four**

**5      contracts that were reviewed, and this evening I**

**6      would ask the full committee to consider three**

**7      of those. The three contracts that I would like**

**8      to have in front of you this evening for**

**9      consideration would be the Network Manager, the**

**10     Business Manager and the Director of Buildings**

**11     and Grounds.**

**12                      MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dr.**

**13     Morelle. Mrs. MacBeth?**

14                   **MRS. MACBETH: Thank you. We had a**  
  
15       **subcommittee meeting, and it was set by**  
  
16       **Mr. Crowley, and on the agenda were reports**  
  
17       **contracts that we looked at, three of them that**  
  
18       **we will, if this committee agrees because we**  
  
19       **have motions to bring it forward, one would be**  
  
20       **tabled, I take it.**

21                   **The first contract that we began**  
  
22       **with at our subcommittee meeting was the Network**  
  
23       **Position, and it comes to the committee on a**  
  
24       **3-to-0 vote. This particular person did not**  
  
25       **have a contract with us. He was hired on a**

1     **six-month contingency, and after six months he**  
2     **was told that if everything was fine he'd be**  
3     **offered a contract. Everybody should have a**  
4     **copy of it in their packet.**

5             **MS. MORELLE: Mr. Chandler was**  
6     **appointed to employment in the district, not**  
7     **hired on a contingency. He was merely told that**  
8     **he would have a performance review after six**  
9     **months, and as a result of that performance**  
10    **review, I'm recommending to the committee that**  
11    **you offer him a three-year contract.**

**12 MR. CHAIRMAN: Do we have a motion?**

**13 MR. WAGNER: I'd like to make a**

**14 motion to approve as accepted, Mr. Chairman.**

**15 MR. COSTA: Second.**

**16 MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion made by Mr.**

**17 Wagner. Second by Mr. Costa. Discussion?**

**18 Mr. Wood?**

**19 MR. WOOD: Mrs. MacBeth, were there**

**20 any changes once it went to the Personnel**

**21 Subcommittee to the contracts?**

**22 MRS. MACBETH: There was language**

**23 changes on various things that were in here that**

**24 didn't mirror the other contracts. We wanted to**

25      make them all pretty much the same. For some

8

1      reason when they were printed out or redone,  
2      there were different wording or clauses in there  
3      that needed to be added to make that consistent.

4              MS. MORELLE: There was one change  
5      made to Mr. Chandler's contract, and I forwarded  
6      you an updated copy, and the change is on page  
7      7, and it's Article 10.

8              MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further  
9      discussion? All those in favor? Opposed?



10       Hearing none, the ayes have it.

11                   **MRS. MACBETH:** The contract that's

12       in front of is a 2-to-1 vote with

13       Mr. Wagner and Mr. Thibodeau voting yes to bring

14       it forward, and I voted no. It's for Mr.

15       Hilton, and it's a three-year contract.

16       Everybody has it in front of them, and I guess

17       the reason I did not want to bring it forward to

18       the full committee was that this person is

19       already under contract with us, and the contract

20       was not due to expire until next year.

21                   **MR. CHAIRMAN:** Have we got a

22       motion, motion to accept?

23

**MR. CHAIRMAN: I'd like**

24

**clarification, Mr. Chairman. This is actually a**

25

**two-year extension on top of the one year that**

9

1

**Mrs. MacBeth has already told us that he has, so**

2

**it's actually a two-year extension, not a**

3

**three-year contract.**

4

**MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, Mrs. MacBeth's**

5

**discussion belongs in discussion and not prior**

6

**thereto. Is there a motion?**

7

**MR. WAGNER: Yes, please. I'd like**

8 to make a motion as presented for a two-year  
9 extension.

10 MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion for a  
11 two-year extension made by Mr. Wagner for  
12 Mr. Hilton.

13 MR. THIBODEAU: Second.

14 MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion?

15 MR. THIBODEAU: I would also say  
16 it's a two-year extension. The contract he has  
17 to end, and that will be a two-year extension.

18 Again, the goal to vote for all the  
19 administrators is after the evaluation, three  
20 years with stability.

**21 MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Any further**

**22 discussion?**

**23 MS. BEAULIEU: Dr. Morelle, do you**

**24 know whether this position was filled when he**

**25 originally was hired?**

**10**

**1 MS. MORELLE: Mr. Hilton was**

**2 originally appointed to the position in**

**3 August 2005, and his initial contract with the**

**4 school department was a one-year contract from**

**5 August of 2005 through June 30, 2006.**

6 MS. BEAULIEU: And his current  
7 contract expires when?

8 MS. MORELLE: June 30th, 2009.

9 MS. BEAULIEU: Thank you.

10 MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Wood?

11 MR. WOOD: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'd

12 just want to go on record saying as I said

13 before, this has nothing to do with these

14 individuals or the contract language, but I feel

15 that these contracts should be in front of the

16 next committee. As I said before, 18 months ago

17 when this committee was formed before, there was

18 talk about how the former committee extended

19        contracts prior to, and I tried to learn from my  
20        mistakes. Like I said, it has nothing to do  
21        with evaluations, performance, or the individual  
22        themselves, but I feel that belongs with the  
23        next committee to extend these contracts since  
24        they are, these employees are still under  
25        contract.

11

1                MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Wood.

2        Any further discussion?

3                MR. COSTA: Mr. Chairman, let me

4       reiterate what Mr. Wood said. I have no  
5       quarrels with these individuals whatsoever,  
6       however, I'm a firm believer a contract is a  
7       contract. If you're here until 2009, you should  
8       honor that contract until 2009. Now, as you  
9       know, Mr. Chairman, last Thursday I had made a  
10      suggestion, but it fell on deaf ears, but I'm  
11      going to make it publicly.

12                It's a travesty that we have to  
13      continue these contracts. I would like to see  
14      incorporated in these contracts where we  
15      negotiating any contracts should not take place  
16      until six months prior to expiration, because I

17 can see right now a year from now we're going to  
18 do the same thing. We'll be here again.  
19 Whoever's on this committee, oh, we've got to  
20 extend so-and-so's contract for two more years  
21 or three more years. I think it's a fair  
22 assessment that no contract should be negotiated  
23 prior to six months of expiration. This way it  
24 gives the new committee and the old committee an  
25 opportunity. And also, in this contract, and I

1 believe it's fairly simple, I mean, it's very



2      difficult today to get rid of somebody without  
3      just cause, and, you know, what's the urgency?  
4      I know we're voting for stability, but let the  
5      new committee come in and take this issue up,  
6      and if they decide that Mr. Hilton and  
7      Mr. Prignano is serving a two-year extension, so  
8      be it, let them take the vote.

9                      MS. MORELLE: Mr. Costa, I'd like  
10     to build on your comment, particularly because  
11     there's some comments that were in the newspaper  
12     today. It seems that this was a topic of  
13     significant interest to the media. The School  
14     Committee that is elected would not have the

15 choice to make recommendations of the employment  
16 of these individuals whether or not these  
17 contracts are extended.

18 One of the issues that this  
19 community and the members of this community do  
20 not seem to clearly understand is Title 16, as  
21 it relates to the responsibilities of the  
22 superintendent and the responsibilities of the  
23 School Committee. The responsibility of the  
24 School Committee is in policy setting, and on a  
25 fairly regular basis I would say to the School

1      **Committee, if there's an issue here, you need to**  
2      **examine the policy that relates to your concern,**  
3      **and you need to establish a policy that you are**  
4      **comfortable with, and then I'll administer that**  
5      **policy. These individuals, as members of the**  
6      **administrative team that work in the district,**  
7      **are in fact under my supervision, and the only**  
8      **individual that has a relationship to the School**  
9      **Committee is in fact the superintendent of**  
10     **schools, and that issue has been lost in this**  
11     **discussion over the last six months.**

12             **I respect your point. I understand**

13      how you're going to vote on these two contracts  
14      tonight. I understand that it has been fodder  
15      for the newspapers, but I don't expect after  
16      these contracts are voted tonight, that we're  
17      going to let this get in the way of moving the  
18      district forward and doing the work that exists  
19      for the betterment of the students. These  
20      people are the ones doing the work, and without  
21      them, I can't do the work.

22                    MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Morelle, policy  
23      has already been set for us in the Rhode Island  
24      General Laws, which is Title 1616-2-9 25C that  
25      says that we have the right power of duty,

1     **whatever, to bind further school committees by**  
2     **contracts. So we can't set a policy that's in**  
3     **abrogation of the law. We have to follow the**  
4     **law. Now, I know Mr. Costa thinks differently,**  
5     **but, I, for one, believe in the law, and yes,**  
6     **you are the one that brings these items before**  
7     **the School Committee, and we act upon your**  
8     **advice and consent, and your advice and consent**  
9     **is to give a three-year contract, excuse me,**  
10    **two-year extension.**

11 MS. BEAULIEU: I guess what I find  
12 a little concerning is two years ago, to my  
13 knowledge, there were three contracts extended  
14 by the prior committee. That included Mr.  
15 Rotella's contract, that included Dr. Morelle's,  
16 and that included Susan Moore's contract. About  
17 a year ago, they extended Alex Prignano's  
18 contract, and that was done by this committee,  
19 so it seems concern for me that because we're  
20 feeling public pressure about the election cycle  
21 that we are influenced to that degree, and I  
22 think some may have always felt that way, and I  
23 respect that, and others have seemed to change

**24      their opinion on this. Again, I think it's**

**25      based on public influence. I strongly feel that**

**15**

**1      we have had the opportunity to work with the**

**2      central administrators, the administration and**

**3      the faculty making decisions, some were easy,**

**4      but at this point, we have two years or more of**

**5      practical experience with this district, and to**

**6      make it the responsibility of the next committee**

**7      when that decision would occur anywhere between**

**8      two and five months from now, I don't think they**

9        have the same level of experience that we would  
10       bring to the table. And so I find it concerning  
11       that the committee people who voted for contract  
12       extensions on this committee are now having a  
13       change of heart, because the argument was that  
14       it was for the best interest of the district.

15                And lastly, from what I read in the  
16       paper today in Mr. Wood's editorial, one of the  
17       things that drives our decision is data, and if  
18       we were very willing to just accept rhetoric or  
19       anecdotal information on our decisions, we  
20       wouldn't be making poor choices for the  
21       students. And the data tells us through things



22 we read in the newspaper, the Sunday paper, the  
23 Providence Journal. They've had a few articles  
24 about the value of continuity in the district,  
25 and we might dismiss that as hogwash, but it's

16

1 data, and the data shows that continuity is  
2 important to a district trying to make change.  
3 And there's a lot of other sources for that  
4 information. There's the McREL Report. It was  
5 offered in the New York Times the other day  
6 about continuity of districts. It's not

7 anything we made up, it has been something that  
8 has been proven time and time again because it's  
9 disappointing that an election cycle is the bar  
10 that gets dropped out in front of us.

11 And we were advised six months ago  
12 not to be making decisions on contracts. I just  
13 find it disheartening that politicians have  
14 crossed the line with education. What we're  
15 trying to do is do the best interest of our  
16 students and the best interest of our community,  
17 and if we're very willing to say no, you need to  
18 wait for the next election cycle, and I have to  
19 say, I disagree with that.

**20 MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mrs.**

**21 Beaulieu. Mr. Wagner?**

**22 MR. WAGNER: Thank you, Mr.**

**23 Chairman. First, Mrs. Beaulieu, I**

**24 wholeheartedly agree with everything you just**

**25 said. I would also like to ask you a question**

**17**

**1 with regards to the votes that were taken in**

**2 2006, and the extensions. Would they have been**

**3 granted in executive session, or were they done**

**4 in public session?**

5                   **MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't think --**

6       **that's barred by the statute of limitation,**

7       **Mr. Wagner.**

8                   **MR. WAGNER: All I'm asking is**

9       **where were the votes taken?**

10                  **MRS. MACBETH: Executive session.**

11                  **MR. WAGNER: So what we're looking**

12       **at is individuals who are willing to stand in**

13       **private session, executive session, and stand**

14       **one way, but when it comes to standing up in**

15       **front of the public, they're willing to change**

16       **their stance?**

17                  **MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. Mr. Wood?**

18                   **MR. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, yes,**  
  
19       **that's relative to this conversation, how the**  
  
20       **votes were taken back in 2006 compared to an**  
  
21       **open session. I stand by my word, whichever way**  
  
22       **I vote, so if it was executive session or in**  
  
23       **public session, I stand by my vote.**

24                   **MR. WAGNER: I believe the stripes**  
  
25       **on the leopard or the tiger have spoken in that**

18

1       **particular situation, however, in addition to**  
  
2       **that, one other thing is in this particular**

3 situation, has been that this was taken up over  
4 six months ago. We're actually going back to  
5 February and March that this process was begun.  
6 This is not something that we started three  
7 weeks ago the night before the election, this  
8 was a decision that was made with the thought  
9 towards the future for the best interest of our  
10 students.

11 Now, you may disagree with the  
12 decision that we have come to, but your thought  
13 process and things that I have heard and read  
14 with regards to the reasoning behind it is  
15 ridiculous. I believe any of you who come up

16 and speak at the podium, any of you who speak to  
17 the press have always got the best interest of  
18 the children of this district at heart, and to  
19 suggest that we do not, I'm just saddened by all  
20 of that.

21 (APPLAUSE)

22 MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you,  
23 Mr. Wagner. Mrs. MacBeth, thank you for  
24 bringing that up about the executive vote. Any  
25 further discussion on Mr. Hilton's contract?

**1       Roll call vote?**

**2               MR. WOOD: No.**

**3               MS. BEAULIEU: Yes.**

**4               MRS. MACBETH: No.**

**5               MR. WAGNER: Yes.**

**6               MR. COSTA: No.**

**7               MR. THIBODEAU: Yes.**

**8               MR. CHAIRMAN: The chair votes yes.**

**9       It's 4 to 3. Mr. Hilton, if you're in the**

**10   audience, congratulations.**

**11               MRS. MACBETH: The next contract**

**12   that is being brought forward to the full**

**13   committee from the Personnel Subcommittee is**



14      **Alex Prignano's. Again, it's a two-year**  
15      **extension, the existing contract that he already**  
16      **has, and it's coming to the committee on a**  
17      **2-to-1 vote with Mr. Wagner and Mr. Thibodeau**  
18      **voting yes, and with me voting no, and we need a**  
19      **motion.**

20                    **MR. WAGNER: So moved.**

21                    **MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion by Mr. Wagner**  
22      **to accept the two-year extension for Mr.**  
23      **Prignano.**

24                    **MS. BEAULIEU: Second.**

25                    **MR. CHAIRMAN: Second by Mrs.**

1       **Beaulieu. Discussion? Yes, Mrs. MacBeth?**

2               **MRS. MACBETH: Again, I would just**

3       **like to state that this particular employee**

4       **already does have a contract that extends at**

5       **least through 2009. It was brought before the**

6       **committee at another time, and I think even**

7       **though nothing was ever found, it even went**

8       **further than that.**

9               **MS. MORELLE: On September 27th of**

10       **2007 on a 6-to-1 vote, it was approved to extend**

11       **his contract. It had not been memorialized.**

12                   **MR. CHAIRMAN:** And that makes a  
13    **difference some way, Mrs. MacBeth?**

14                   **MRS. MACBETH:** No, I was just  
15    **stating why I was not bringing it forward, that**  
16    **I voted no on that and that was my reasons why.**

17                   **MR. CHAIRMAN:** Okay, any further  
18    **discussion? Mr. Costa?**

19                   **MR. COSTA:** I remember at one  
20    **point, I think it was a year ago or so now, that**  
21    **we did have a discussion on extending**  
22    **Mr. Prignano's contract until 2010; is that**  
23    **true?**

24                   **MRS. MACBETH:** Yes.

**1 I know the committee voted 7 to**

**2 nothing or 6-to-1, whatever it was. The**

**3 superintendent voted before us, I know that.**

**4 MS. MORELLE: You voted, you never**

**5 negotiated terms, and then you proceeded after**

**6 six months to redirect me to evaluate all of the**

**7 employees and bring that recommendation for a**

**8 term of employment. What is now in front of you**

**9 from the Personnel Subcommittee from last week**

10 on a 2-to-1 vote is a two-year extension.

11 MR. WOOD: That redirection that

12 was clarified last week did not come from the

13 full committee, it came from the Personnel

14 Subcommittee.

15 MRS. MACBETH: And that's been

16 something that was brought up at the Personnel

17 Subcommittee, and I just want to go on to say

18 that I remember discussion, doing evaluations,

19 however, I have no recollection, nor I know that

20 we've asked for the contract to be brought

21 forward. The other two people at the meeting

22 may agree or disagree with that.

23                   **MR. CHAIRMAN:** Any further  
24   discussion on Mr. Prignano? Mr. Costa?

25                   **MR. COSTA:** I move to vote.

22

1                   **MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Costa moves the  
2   question to vote on the contract. Is there a  
3   second?

4                   **MR. WAGNER:** Second.

5                   **MR. CHAIRMAN:** All those in favor?  
6   Opposed? Hearing none. The ayes have it.  
7   Right now we'll go right to the question of the

8        **contract extension for Alex Prignano on a roll**

9        **call vote.**

10                **MR. THIBODEAU: Yes.**

11                **MR. COSTA: No.**

12                **MR. WAGNER: Yes.**

13                **MRS. MACBETH: No.**

14                **MS. BEAULIEU: Yes.**

15                **MR. WOOD: No.**

16                **MR. CHAIRMAN: The chair votes yes.**

17        **It's 4 to 3. Mr. Prignano, congratulations, if**

18        **you're here tonight.**

19                **MR. CHAIRMAN: Anything further?**

20                **MRS. MACBETH: On Personnel there**

21 was one more contract.

22 MR. CHAIRMAN: You're out of order,

23 Mrs. MacBeth.

24 MRS. MACBETH: No, I'm not, I'm

25 chair of the subcommittee and the subcommitte

23

1 asked to have it brought forward for a vote, if

2 they choose to table it --

3 MR. CHAIRMAN: The subcommittee has

4 no choice over it, Mrs. MacBeth. You have to

5 remember we act upon the advice and consent of



6 the superintendent. It's in the Rhode Island

7 General Laws. You're out of order.

8 Next item on the agenda is the

9 Approval of Minutes, Open Session 8/28/08.

10 MR. WAGNER: So moved.

11 MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion by Mr.

12 Wagner. I'll second it.

13 MR. WOOD: Second.

14 MR. CHAIRMAN: And Mr. Wood seconds

15 it, along with me. Discussion? All those in

16 favor? The ayes have it. The next item is the

17 Approval of Minutes for the Executive Session of

18 8/14/08.

**19 MR. WAGNER: So moved.**

**20 MS. BEAULIEU: Second.**

**21 MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion?**

**22 MR. WOOD: Are those the ones that**

**23 just left?**

**24 MR. CHAIRMAN: Those are the ones**

**25 that we just got and we should some**

**24**

**1 accountability on that. They're from the August**

**2 14th meeting, and we're just bringing it into**

**3 this committee right now, and our clerk should**

4     have got a grasp on what's happening because  
5     there are people out here that are reporting us  
6     for late minutes, anything that we're late on,  
7     and we don't want that to happen.

8               MR. COSTA: Mr. Chairman, I believe  
9     you said August 28th. Well, there's an error.  
10    I just noticed it and I want it corrected. I  
11    was not here, and she has me present, so I want  
12    it to be subdirected that I was not here on  
13    August 28th.

14             MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, let the record  
15    reflect that Mr. Costa was not here on  
16    August 28th. Donald, you were here, you were

17       here in body, but not in spirit.

18               **MR. COSTA:** Just make it duly noted

19       that I was not here.

20               **MR. WOOD:** Also, if you can make a

21       correction at that time. I don't know if he had

22       resigned as vice chairman, but he wasn't the

23       vice chairman of the committee at that time.

24               **MR. CHAIRMAN:** Okay. We are on the

25       approval for the Executive Minutes of 8/14/08.

1       We've had a motion and a second. Any further

**2        discussion? Mrs. Beaulieu?**

**3                    MS. BEAULIEU: I guess I want to be**

**4        certain that these are not filed outside of the**

**5        time frame of the requirements. Mr. Rotella,**

**6        are you aware of any time frame in which we need**

**7        to approve these minutes?**

**8                    MR. ROTELLA: Mrs. Beaulieu, I**

**9        looked. I have begun to look at the Open**

**10       Meetings Law in dealing with minutes. The Open**

**11       Meetings Law -- if you give me one second.**

**12       42-46-7 has several different provisions.**

**13       42-46-7 basically says that a record of all**

**14       votes shall be taken at all meetings and public**

15       bodies, and the minutes shall be required within  
16       two weeks of the date of the vote or within 35  
17       days, whichever, or at the next scheduled  
18       meeting.

19               It then talks about minutes of  
20       closed sessions. It says that the minutes of  
21       the closed session shall be made available at  
22       the next regularly scheduled meeting unless the  
23       majority of the body votes to keep the minutes  
24       closed pursuant to 42-46-4 or 42-46-5. Now, as  
25       a result of that particular section, I had a

1 conversation with the Attorney General's Office

2 this morning, actually yesterday morning, and

3 Mr. Field from the AG's office posed the

4 question. As far as executive session minutes

5 are concerned, there is no time limit specified

6 within the statute. And my question was, in

7 fact, is there a time limit that is imposed?

8 And from reading the particular session, he

9 indicated that he could not in fact specifically

10 delineate a time frame by which executive

11 minutes should be presented, however, he did

12 concede that those minutes had to be maintained.

13                   He also conceded that in fact

14       42-46-7B dealing with the public minutes was

15       basically the guideline that is in the statute.

16       I indicated to him that I would be sending him a

17       written request for a clarification on this

18       particular section from the AG as to what time

19       frames are involved in providing executive

20       section minutes, be they're open or be they're

21       closed, and the indication seemed to be that

22       within a reasonable time in the legislature,

23       basically, it said, a reasonable time is the

24       next regular-scheduled meeting or 35 days,

25       whichever is sooner, and I will get that in



1 writing from the AG.

2 MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr.

3 Rotella.

4 MRS. BEAULIEU: It's not specific

5 to any executive session minutes, it's just a

6 general question that you asked the Attorney

7 General?

8 MR. ROTELLA: Well, I asked him

9 with regards to executive session minutes that

10 were in fact sealed, and I also asked him about

11 executive minutes. The section seems to be very  
12 clear that if minutes are not sealed, they're  
13 due at the next regularly-scheduled meeting. If  
14 they are sealed, however, there is no particular  
15 time frame in the statute.

16 MS. BEAULIEU: Thank you.

17 MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further  
18 discussion on the Approval of Minutes of the  
19 Executive Session of 8/14/08. All those in  
20 favor? Opposed? Hearing none. The ayes have  
21 it. Next item on the agenda is Personnel  
22 Recommendations. Dr. Morelle?

23 MS. MORELLE: You have personnel

24 recommendations that were provided to you in  
25 your packet and an addendum that was provided to

28

1 you yesterday. If I could, I'd like to begin  
2 with the addendum. On the addendum is an  
3 appointment. I'm very glad to bring forward to  
4 you this evening with the advice and consent of  
5 the School Committee on the appointment of Lisa  
6 Di Giovanni, K-8 Literacy Coordinator, at  
7 Systemwide, effective September 26, 2008.

8 MS. BEAULIEU: So moved.

**9 MR. COSTA: Second.**

**10 MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion? All**

**11 those in favor? Opposed? Hearing no**

**12 opposition. The ayes have it.**

**13 MS. MORELLE: And Lisa is in the**

**14 audience. I'd like to congratulate her. Our**

**15 position is another one of the additions that**

**16 we've made to our support staff, and we're**

**17 really proud to have Lisa take the position. I**

**18 know she's going to do a wonderful job, going to**

**19 support the Dunn Literacy initiative and support**

**20 our K-8 reading and writing efforts, so**

**21 congratulations, Lisa. Thank you.**

22                   **MS. BEAULIEU:** I just want to add

23       **how well respected Lisa is at Community School**

24       **and how we're sad to share her with the**

25       **district, but we understand it's a wonderful**

29

1       **opportunity for the entire district, and I'm**

2       **looking forward to hearing more about your work**

3       **with the Dunn and how you're helping to move our**

4       **literacy efforts forward, so congratulations.**

5                   **MS. MORELLE:** Next is a

6       **resignation. I request the advice and consent**

7 of the School Committee on the resignation of  
8 Steven Jerauld, Assistant Football Coach, at  
9 Cumberland High School, effective 9/4/2008.

10 MR. WOOD: So moved.

11 MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion by Mr. Wood.

12 MS. BEAULIEU: Second.

13 MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion? Yes,

14 Mr. Wagner?

15 MR. WAGNER: He's not going to file

16 for unemployment, is he?

17 MS. MORELLE: I'll put Mr. Rotella

18 on that.

19 MR. WAGNER: Thank you.

20                   **MR. CHAIRMAN: Was there a question**  
21    **in your mind?**

22                   **MR. WAGNER: Yes.**

23                   **MR. CHAIRMAN: I take it this is**  
24    **Mr. Costa's buddy?**

25                   **MR. WAGNER: Yes.**

30

1                   **MS. MORELLE: I'd like to take**  
2    **these out of order for a purpose and go to the**  
3    **leave of absence next. I request the advice and**  
4    **consent of the School Committee on the FMLA**

5        **Maternity Leave of Julie Dean, Grade 2 teacher,**  
6        **John McLaughlin Cumberland Hill Elementary**  
7        **School, effective November 24, 2008, with an**  
8        **expected return date of January 20th, 2009.**

9                **MR. COSTA: So moved.**

10               **MS. BEAULIEU: Second.**

11               **MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion by Mr. Costa,**  
12        **second by Mrs. Beaulieu.**

13               **MS. MORELLE: Could I correct that**  
14        **date. It would be November 24th that she'd be**  
15        **leaving.**

16               **MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?**  
17        **Opposed? Hearing no opposition, the ayes have**



18 it.

19 MS. MORELLE: I request the advice

20 and consent of the School Committee on the

21 appointment of William Fasulo, Assistant

22 Football Coach, at Cumberland High School

23 effective September 26, 2008.

24 MS. BEAULIEU: So moved.

25 MR. COSTA: Second.

31

1 MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?

2 Opposed? Hearing no opposition, the ayes have

3     it.

4                   **MR. COSTA:** Dr. Morelle, amongst  
5     the paperwork, I know this gentleman has a great  
6     resume and credentials, but it's all in  
7     Massachusetts. Is he Rhode Island certified?

8                   **MS. MORELLE:** I usually ask the  
9     general question of these candidates and are  
10    candidates certified and able to take the  
11    position, but if you feel more comfortable, I'll  
12    make it contingent on certification. It's an  
13    easy, simple thing to do.

14                  **MR. COSTA:** Just to make everything  
15    legal.

16                   **MRS. MACBETH:** Within our packet on  
17   the last line it says just applied to the  
18   department of ed for his Rhode Island coaching  
19   certification and we also have that one on  
20   another one that's coming in front of us. I  
21   would like to make the motion contingent upon  
22   certification.

23                   **MR. CHAIRMAN:** Yes, there's a  
24   motion pending. Do you want to withdraw your  
25   motion and your second, whoever made them?

**1                   MR. COSTA: I'll withdraw second.**

**2                   MR. CHAIRMAN: And start with**

**3       Mrs. MacBeth, what was your motion? Go ahead,**

**4       Mr. Costa.**

**5                   MR. COSTA: I make a motion that we**

**6       accept the assistant football coach at**

**7       Cumberland High School contingent to Mr.**

**8       Gieselman's memo that he just applied for the**

**9       department of ed for his Rhode Island Coach's**

**10      Certificate based on getting a certification.**

**11                  MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there a second to**

**12      that?**

**13                  MR. WAGNER: So moved, second.**

**14 MRS. MACBETH: Second.**

**15 MR. CHAIRMAN: Second by Mr. Wagner**

**16 and Mrs. MacBeth. Any further discussion?**

**17 MS. BEAULIEU: I think he had a**

**18 very talented resumé. I think he can bring more**

**19 to the district than just an assistant football**

**20 coach. He's a very talented person.**

**21 MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mrs.**

**22 Beaulieu. All those in favor? Opposed?**

**23 Hearing none, the eyes have it.**

**24 MS. MORELLE: I request the advice**

**25 and consent of the School Committee on the**

1      appointment of Lourenco Lopes, Girls' Assistant  
2      Soccer Coach, at Cumberland High School,  
3      effective 9/26/2008.

4              MR. COSTA: So moved.

5              MR. WOOD: Second.

6              MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion?

7              MR. COSTA: Mr. Chairman, great

8      choice here. This individual is great. He's a

9      nice individual, he knows the game so that the

10      girls on the junior varsity will benefit, and I

11      wish him well.

**12 MR. CHAIRMAN: Mrs. MacBeth?**

**13 MRS. MACBETH: Can we also make**

**14 this contingent upon certification?**

**15 MS. MORELLE: I looked at the**

**16 paperwork, and I didn't think it was necessary**

**17 on this one.**

**18 MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. It's**

**19 contingent upon certification. All those in**

**20 favor? Opposed? Hearing no opposition, the**

**21 ayes have it.**

**22 MS. MORELLE: I request the advice**

**23 and consent of the School Committee on the**

**24 appointment of Justine Rivet, Assistant**

**25      Volleyball Coach, at Cumberland High School,**

**34**

**1      effective September 26, 2008, contingent on**

**2      Rhode Island certification.**

**3                    MS. BEAULIEU: So moved.**

**4                    MRS. MACBETH: Second.**

**5                    MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion? All**

**6      those in favor? Opposed? Hearing none, the**

**7      ayes have it.**

**8                    MR. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, I'm going**

**9      to recuse myself.**



10 MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Wood is recusing  
11 himself from this next one that's coming up and  
12 recusing himself from any discussion and/or vote  
13 because he is related to the party.

14 MS. MORELLE: I request the advice  
15 and consent of the School Committee on the  
16 appointment of Darlene Wood Football  
17 Cheerleading Coach/Advisor, at Cumberland High  
18 School, effective September 26, 2008.

19 MR. COSTA: So moved.

**20                    MRS. MACBETH: Second.**

21 MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion?

22 MR. THIBODEAU: Mr. Chairman, I'd

23        like to ask a question to legal. This isn't a  
24        union position, correct?

25                    MR. ROTELLA: No, it's not.

35

1                    MR. THIBODEAU: So when we do the  
2        teacher contract, Mr. Wood can still  
3        participate?

4                    MR. ROTELLA: Yes, this is not a  
5        union position, it is a stipend position, it is  
6        only seasonal, and Mrs. Wood is acting as a  
7        coach for that particular season for the

8 cheerleader's period.

9 MR. COSTA: She's an appointment at

10 will. There's no contract, or nothing?

11 MR. ROTELLA: As I said, again,

12 it's a stipend position.

13 MS. MORELLE: I appreciate your

14 discussion before you vote. All of these

15 coaching positions should be one-year only

16 positions. They did not come forward with the

17 full list, and I apologize for that oversight in

18 terms of how they were presented this evening.

19 I don't know if we need to go back and amend

20 them or can generally acknowledge, whatever you

**21        want to do, Mr. Crowley.**

**22                    MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, you brought**

**23        the full list, as I recall, back at the end of**

**24        the summer?**

**25                    MS. MORELLE: I did, but these also**

**36**

**1        should only be for one year.**

**2                    MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that's**

**3        understood with the way the coaching situation**

**4        is.**

**5                    MS. MORELLE: Thank you.**

6                   **MR. CHAIRMAN:** Any further  
7   discussion? All those in favor? Opposed?  
8   Hearing no opposition, the ayes have it. Come  
9   on back, Mr. Wood.

10               **MS. MORELLE:** If any of the  
11   appointments are in the audience tonight that  
12   would like to stand for the school committee's  
13   congratulations, we wish you good luck.

14               **MR. CHAIRMAN:** Next item on the  
15   agenda is Old Business, Building Committee  
16   Update. Mr. Wood?

17               **MR. WOOD:** Actually, the 3.5  
18   Buildings Committee did meet last night just to

19 basically update what's happening at Cumberland  
20 Hill. The gym is up and running. They are  
21 using it, I believe. They're still waiting for  
22 the shelving to come in for the media center and  
23 we're looking for volunteers or committees to do  
24 a sort of rededication for an opening of the  
25 gym, and I do believe the PTOs in each school

37

1 are handling that, and I hope to see everybody  
2 this weekend here at the high school for  
3 rededication and to see what the committee

4       worked on for four or five years that was  
5       established through the efforts of a group of  
6       individuals.

7               MR. CHAIRMAN: How about those  
8       carbon monoxide detectors, Mr. Wood?

9               MR. WOOD: Mr. Hilton?

10              MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I'm asking you.

11              MR. WOOD: I'll check with Mr.  
12       Hilton.

13              MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you.

14       Any questions for Mr. Wood?

15              MS. MORELLE: Would it be all right  
16       if I spoke about the Saturday rededication now.

**17                   MR. CHAIRMAN: I think so.**

**18                   MS. MORELLE: Thank you. Saturday**

**19       and Sunday of this weekend we have planned a**

**20       rededication of the Cumberland High School**

**21       campus. There's been a Celebration Committee**

**22       working since January to organize tours of the**

**23       campus and a formal dedication ceremony at 12**

**24       noon on Saturday. We have extended invitations**

**25       to everyone in the community, as well as some**

**1       formal invitations to state and local**



**2 dignitaries. We expect Governor Elizabeth**  
**3 Roberts to be here, as well as Attorney General**  
**4 Patrick Lynch. The mayor and Counsel President**  
**5 Higgins will be providing a proclamation on**  
**6 behalf of the town, and we have a very special**  
**7 ceremonial presentation of a key to the high**  
**8 school faculty to reopen the high school and the**  
**9 campus.**

**10 The high school clef singers and**  
**11 band will be providing entertainment, and we**  
**12 expect it to be a very pleasant ceremony. It**  
**13 lasts just about an hour, so those of you who**  
**14 enjoy that kind of ceremonial aspects of**

15      festivities, we would love to have you for the  
16      12 noon ceremony, otherwise, it's like an open  
17      house in your home, everything's ready. The  
18      doors are going to be swung wide open, and  
19      you're able to come in and walk through and see  
20      classrooms, the art wing, the science labs and  
21      the wellness center and enjoy some time with  
22      students that will be here and faculty members,  
23      and the building will be open after the ceremony  
24      from 1:30 to 5 on Saturday and on Sunday from 1  
25      to 4. This is your opportunity to see what your

1      tax dollars have contributed, the education of  
2      Cumberland High School students, and it's also  
3      the high school's opportunity to say thank you  
4      to the community, so we really do hope that  
5      everyone will take a few minutes over the  
6      weekend and stop by.

7                    MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Wood, do you  
8      have anything further to add to your report?

9                    MR. WOOD: If I could have a  
10     property subcommittee prior to, before our next  
11     meeting, and the first thing that will be on our  
12     agenda will be the carbon monoxide detectors.

13                   **MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Any further**

14           **questions of Mr. Wood? Our next item is**

15           **Recalls. Do we have any recalls?**

16                   **MS. MORELLE: None this evening.**

17                   **MR. CHAIRMAN: Next is new Business**

18           **2008/2009 school year. Dr. Carney?**

19                   **MS. CARNEY: You have before you**

20           **what I hope will be the last series of requests**

21           **for approval for home school. We have six**

22           **students whose parents have requested, well,**

23           **there are siblings involved in some of them,**

24           **three renewals and three new requests. We have**

25           **reviewed there plans as presented, and I**

1       **recommend you approve each one of them.**

2               **MR. COSTA: So moved.**

3               **MR. WOOD: Second.**

4               **MR. WAGNER: Second.**

5               **MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion by Mr. Costa,**

6       **second by Mr. Wood and Mr. Wagner. Any further**

7       **discussion? All those in favor? Opposed?**

8       **Hearing no opposition, the ayes have it. Next**

9       **item Discussion and/or Vote to approve**

10       **Superintendent's Performance Pay Per Article 6**

11        **Compensation of Superintendent's Contract.**

12                **MR. WAGNER: Mr. Chairman, I would**

13        **like to table that, please. Oh, wait a minute.**

14        **I take that back. I'm sorry.**

15                **MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Thibodeau?**

16                **MR. THIBODEAU: So the question is,**

17        **did she meet in the eyes of the committee, did**

18        **she meet the criteria. We all heard in**

19        **executive session her support that she provided**

20        **everyone with materials. So tonight, I would**

21        **like to take these individually. First one,**

22        **Goal 1.**

23                **MR. CHAIRMAN: The first one is**

24      **Goal 1, Goal-setting Process, the Superintendent**  
25      **of schools will direct and supervise the**

41

1      **revision of the District Strategic Plan. Do we**  
2      **have a motion?**

3              **MR. THIBODEAU: I make a motion**  
4      **that she showed evidence of that and to award**  
5      **her the stipend per contract. That's my motion.**

6              **MR. CHAIRMAN: And what is that**  
7      **stipend, Mr. Thibodeau?**

8              **MR. THIBODEAU: \$1,000.**

**9 MR. WAGNER: Second.**

**10 MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion by Mr.**

**11 Thibodeau, second by Mr. Wagner. Discussion?**

**12 All those in favor? Opposed? Hearing no**

**13 opposition. The ayes have it.**

**14 Goal number 2 is Collective Focus**

**15 on Student Learning, the Superintendent of the**

**16 schools will provide leadership for instruction.**

**17 MR. THIBODEAU: Based upon the**

**18 executive session and the evidence that she**

**19 showed, I believe she met that goal and to award**

**20 her the stipend of \$1,000.**

**21 MR. WAGNER: Second.**



22                   **MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion by Mr.**

23           **Thibodeau, second by Mr. Wagner. Discussion?**

24           **All those in favor? Let me do this by roll call**

25           **vote.**

42

1                   **MR. WOOD: No.**

2                   **MS. BEAULIEU: Yes.**

3                   **MRS. MACBETH: No.**

4                   **MR. WAGNER: Yes.**

5                   **MR. COSTA: Yes.**

6                   **MR. THIBODEAU: Yes.**

**7 MR. CHAIRMAN: The chair votes yes.**

**8 It's 5 to 2 with Wood and MacBeth against.**

**9 Next goal, Goal number 3,**

**10 Communication for Achievement and Instruction.**

**11 The superintendent will implement a**

**12 communication plan to increase clear shared**

**13 expectations for the district vision for**

**14 achievement and instruction.**

**15 MR. THIBODEAU: Mr. Chairman, I**

**16 move based upon the executive session and the**

**17 evidence that she presented that she in fact met**

**18 the goals. We'll award her a thousand dollars.**

**19 MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion by Mr.**

**20      Thibodeau.**

**21                   MR. WAGNER: Second.**

**22                   MR. CHAIRMAN: Discussion? All**

**23      those in favor? Opposed. Roll call vote.**

**24                   MR. THIBODEAU: Yes.**

**25                   MR. COSTA: No.**

**43**

**1                   MR. WAGNER: Yes.**

**2                   MRS. MACBETH: No.**

**3                   MS. BEAULIEU: Yes.**

**4                   MR. WOOD: No.**

**5 MR. CHAIRMAN: The chair votes yes.**

**6 Congratulations, Dr. Morelle.**

**7 MS. MORELLE: If I may just make a**

**8 couple of comments. First of all, I appreciate**

**9 the thoroughness of the committee in reviewing**

**10 the materials that I provided to you through**

**11 this process, and I look forward to finishing**

**12 the process for improving the goals for the**

**13 upcoming school year. We did have discussion**

**14 on one of three goals this evening, and I would**

**15 just look for direction from the committee as to**

**16 when you want to schedule additional**

**17 opportunities to finish that discussion so we**

18        could move to approve future goals.

19                    MR. CHAIRMAN: I would say we do

20        that as quickly as possible. You and I will

21        discuss that early next week, if not tomorrow.

22        The next item on the agenda is Discussion and/or

23        Vote to Approve Superintendent's 2008-2009

24        Annual Objectives.

25                    MR. WAGNER: That's what I wish to

44

1        table, Mr. Chairman.

2                    MR. THIBODEAU: I'll second that.

**3 MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?**

**4 Opposed? Hearing no opposition. The ayes have**

**5 it. The next item on the agenda is Update on**

**6 Dunn Literacy Initiative. Dr. Morelle?**

**7 MS. MORELLE: Mr. Crowley, at this**

**8 time this agenda item as the next agenda item on**

**9 the NECAP Science Results that will be**

**10 communicated to you by Dr. Carney. Dr. Carney?**

**11 MS. CARNEY: Thank you. We're**

**12 finally getting going on the literacy initiative**

**13 from the Dunn folks. Within the last two weeks,**

**14 the assistant director from the HILL, which is**

**15 the Hanson Institute for Language Learning**

16 associated with Mass. General Hospital,  
17 Catherine Perry, has spent a few mornings with  
18 us meeting with reading teachers and principals  
19 and making some suggestions as to how we could  
20 best move forward with the initiative within the  
21 regional school sites. We also have assigned to  
22 the district, a liaison, Mrs. Dawn Carusi, who  
23 will be spending at least three and-a-half days  
24 a week in the district working with folks in the  
25 elementary schools, and she began her visits at

1 the elementary school this week. So we're glad  
2 to have her on board. We also are moving  
3 forward with the plans on the November 4th  
4 Professional Development Day which happens to be  
5 election day so schools are closed for students,  
6 but not for the staff.

7 The elementary teachers will be  
8 trained that day on Aims Web which is to help  
9 and assess student progress, and that's what  
10 we're going to use for data collection in terms  
11 of literacy for the students. And the  
12 principals are presently working to identify  
13 who'll serve on the individual building literacy



14 teams. So in short, we're finally getting  
15 started, and I think to date, it's been very  
16 well received. I think the teachers respect the  
17 professional credentials that these folks bring  
18 forward. They're very impressive in terms of  
19 their background and their knowledge of  
20 literacy. And we feel very comfortable that our  
21 teachers will work very well with them and the  
22 students will benefit.

23 MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dr.

24 Carney. Any questions? Mr. Wood?

25 MR. WOOD: Dr. Carney, this girl

1       you mentioned, she's an employee of the HILL?

2                   **MS. CARNEY: The Dunn HILL**

3       **Collaborative, yes.**

4                   **MR. WOOD: And the teams that are**

5       **to be formed in the schools, can you give us a**

6       **breakdown who will be on that team?**

7                   **MS. CARNEY: Well, typically, you'd**

8       **have an administrator, you'd have a special**

9       **educator and you would have a reading**

10       **specialist. You might have -- well, you would**

11       **hope to have representation from the lower**

12      grades and also representation from the upper  
13      grades, so the composition would be about six  
14      people.

15              MR. WOOD: Thank you.

16              MS. CARNEY: You're welcome.

17              MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further  
18      questions of Dr. Carney on the Dunn Literacy  
19      Institute? Okay. Thank you, very much,  
20      Dr. Carney. Next item on the agenda is the  
21      Presentation on the 2008 NECAP Science  
22      Assessments. Dr. Morelle?

23              MS. MORELLE: If you read in the  
24      paper within the last two days the results of

**25      the Science NECAP Assessment session that the**

**47**

**1      students took last spring, those results were**

**2      released last Tuesday afternoon. And I'm going**

**3      to give you a brief overview as to how the**

**4      Cumberland students fared on that particular**

**5      test. This slide really shows the entire**

**6      profile. As some of you may be aware, there are**

**7      four different levels that students can attain**

**8      on this test. The fourth level is the one where**

**9      they demonstrate proficiency with distinction,**

10      it's the strongest performance. And then the  
11      third level is the level of proficiency, second  
12      level is partially proficient, and the level 1  
13      is substantially limited in demonstration  
14      proficiency.

15              This particular exam was only given  
16      in grades 4 and 10, and this was the first  
17      formal time it had been given. If you notice  
18      that the Mean Scaled Score, this is the score on  
19      the left under town represents Cumberland's Mean  
20      Scaled Score, and to the right is the State of  
21      Rhode Island. And in grade 4 our youngsters  
22      have had a scaled score of 437, and the state's

23      score was 436, so almost exactly equal. In  
24      grade 8 the scaled score for Cumberland was 832,  
25      and the state 831; once again, we were a point

48

1      ahead in comparable scores. And in grade 11,  
2      Cumberland students, 1133 for the scaled score,  
3      and the state, 1131. We were a couple of points  
4      ahead of them. If you take a look at the  
5      percents of the students obtaining a level 4  
6      which is proficient with distinction, you notice  
7      in grade 4, one percent of the fourth graders

8 and one percent of the fourth graders in the  
9 state were able to obtain that level of  
10 proficiency. In grade 8, zero percent of  
11 youngsters in Cumberland and zero percent of 8th  
12 grade students in the State of Rhode Island  
13 could hit the category with distinction, in  
14 terms of proficiency. And in grade 11, the town  
15 was zero percent in terms of distinction and one  
16 percent for the State of Rhode Island. If you  
17 look at the level 3 percentage, keep in mind  
18 levels 3 and 4 together demonstrate the percent  
19 or indicate the percent of students who have  
20 attained proficiency. So in the State of Rhode

21      Island, if you combine percents of level 4 and  
22      percents of level 3, Cumberland had 40 percent  
23      of the students in grade 4 proficient in  
24      Science, the state had 37 percent. In grade 8  
25      between level 3 and 4 combined, Cumberland

1      students in grade 8, 21 percent showed  
2      proficiency in Science, 18 percent across the  
3      State of Rhode Island. In grade 11 combining  
4      percents in levels 4 and 3, 18 percent of  
5      Cumberland High School 11th grade students



6      obtained proficiency compared to 17 percent of  
7      11th graders across the state. Now, when you go  
8      down to the percent of youngsters in level 2 and  
9      level 1, those are not the levels where you want  
10     the figure under town to be higher than the  
11     figure under Rhode Island, because those are the  
12     youngsters who have not been able to demonstrate  
13     proficiency. So if you take a look, they're  
14     pretty even within the terms of the 4th grade.  
15     In the second level, 42 were in level 2,  
16     42 percent of the state's 4th graders were in  
17     level 2. However, the difference is in the  
18     percentage of level 1, which is the poorest

19 performing level, 17 percent of our fourth  
20 graders fell into that category wherein the  
21 state of Rhode Island it was 22 percent. And in  
22 grade 8, in the past proficient we had  
23 46 percent of our 8th graders and the state had  
24 43. And then in level 1 we had 33 percent who  
25 were performing at the lowest level compared to

50

1 38 percent of 8th graders in Rhode Island that  
2 were at the lowest level. And lastly in high  
3 school, the juniors, 33 percent fell into the

4 level 1 category, compared to 39 percent of 11th  
5 graders in the State of Rhode Island. Now, I  
6 just want to make some comments about the level  
7 4 category. If you take a look at the level 4  
8 category, you'll notice there's clearly a very  
9 poor showing in terms of students who were able  
10 to demonstrate proficiency with distinction but  
11 I want to point out to you the situation. For  
12 instance, last year in grade 4 when our  
13 youngsters were taking that exam, we had 372  
14 fourth graders that participated. The State of  
15 Rhode Island last year had 11,000 students take  
16 that exam. Out of 11,000 students, 129 in the

17      State of Rhode Island were able to hit  
18      distinction. If you look at grade 8, where it  
19      indicates that there was zero percent from the  
20      Town of Cumberland and zero percent from the  
21      State of Rhode Island, so almost 12,000  
22      students, grade 8th students who took that exam,  
23      out of those 12,000 students, one of them in  
24      Cumberland was able to hit distinction, and out  
25      of 12,000 students, 53 were able to demonstrate

1      distinction. And in grade 11, there were 10,500

2 youngsters in grade 11 that took that test. One  
3 in Cumberland hit distinction, 72 in the state  
4 out of 10,500 hit distinction. Personally, I  
5 think if you have a test where 12,000 people  
6 take an exam this happens to be -- I'm picking  
7 the eighth-graders, it applies to either of  
8 them, whether it's 4th grade or 10th, you have  
9 12,000 youngsters, and only 53 of those 12,000  
10 people were able to demonstrate proficiency.  
11 Personally, my opinion that I would question the  
12 testing instrument, I do not believe that in the  
13 State of Rhode Island we only have 53 students  
14 who are able to distinguish themselves in that

15     testing situation. We send hundreds of kids on  
16     to very, very good Institutions of Higher  
17     Learning. They have 53 out of 12,000 in the  
18     whole state. I think it calls into question the  
19     testing instrument that's being used. I'm not  
20     condoning, I'm not excusing that they're  
21     disappointing scores, but quite frankly, I am  
22     questioning the instrument when the creme de la  
23     creme cannot out of 12,000, come through  
24     stronger than 53 students. Out of 11,000, 129  
25     and that's in grade 4, out of 10,500 you have

1     **72. I think quite frankly, and it was the first**  
2     **formal administration of that test, and I think**  
3     **you're probably going to find that they will**  
4     **look seriously about whether that top level of**  
5     **designation is as it should have been. I'd like**  
6     **to go to the next chart here. If you just take**  
7     **a look at in these three charts and there are**  
8     **only three of them, grade 4, 8, and 11, the**  
9     **triangle is Cumberland, the diamond is the**  
10    **state. And when I was going over the math,**  
11    **reading and writing last year, I made mention to**  
12    **folks that if you looked at that diagram, you'll**

13      see a diamond which is Cumberland, there's a  
14      line through it. That bar is for the margin of  
15      error. Now, the smaller the group that's tested  
16      the larger the margin of error. You will not  
17      see a margin of error band in the diamond  
18      because more than 10,000 students took the exam,  
19      so you're probably in a higher degree of  
20      accuracy there. But I will tell you this, when  
21      we went last spring when we went to the workshop  
22      and interpreted test charts, if you took and  
23      moved that triangle down and if it intersected  
24      with the state, then it's a comparable level of  
25      performance. So we appeared to be a little



1     **ahead, that's a good thing, but the fact is,**  
2     **when they intersect, you're pretty comparable.**  
3     **And that's true in all three of those categories**  
4     **right there. They were tested in physical**  
5     **science, earth/space science, life science and**  
6     **inquiry. And that's in grade 4. We're going to**  
7     **grade 8, and you'll see a similar situation.**  
8     **Keep in mind that the triangle now is**  
9     **Cumberland, the diamond is the state and once**  
10    **again, they're very close together in terms of**

11 the position. You see they're almost exactly  
12 the same as physical science. Earth science,  
13 we're a little bit to the right in terms of life  
14 science, so a little bit of a stronger  
15 performance there, but right across the whole  
16 state in all three grades, inquiry is the place  
17 that they have the most difficult. If we go to  
18 11th, keep in mind the triangle is Cumberland,  
19 the diamond is the state, and once again, the  
20 triangle is a little to the right of each  
21 category, but nonetheless, very close, if you  
22 move them very close together they're  
23 comparable, but a little ahead of the band,

24      which says that we're at least at state and  
25      maybe slightly above in terms of performance of

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1      students.

2              Some of the things that I'm, quite  
3      frankly, that we have been doing in terms of the  
4      science curriculum and the teachers at each of  
5      the levels have been given attention to this,  
6      you're all aware that there are grade level  
7      expectations for the younger students and grade  
8      span expectations for the older students and

9 teachers have been working to make sure that the  
10 curriculum that they're using are lines to the  
11 standards of the State of Rhode Island. At the  
12 elementary level we've been using science kits  
13 for a number of years. It started in the late  
14 '90s. I think last year is the year where we  
15 finally completed purchasing for each grades 1  
16 through 5, three kits per grade.

17 We also last year piloted for the  
18 first time the use of a kit that happens to be  
19 on the human body in grade 6 at the middle  
20 school level, and we're also going to implement  
21 the use of kits second semester at the middle

22 school level in grades 7 and 8. And grade 7 is  
23 population and grade 8 gets force and motion.  
24 The topic maps that we have in science indicated  
25 to us that at the middle school level there were

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1 some gaps in our curriculum. One of the places  
2 that we realized that was human distance or the  
3 human body appeared not to be as adequately  
4 covered as it probably should be at the middle  
5 school. We need to look at that number. We're  
6 moving in that direction, and we also know that

7 we had some gaps in addressing space as one of  
8 the GSEs at the secondary level in grades 5  
9 through 8. So those two areas that we know we  
10 had some gaps, but we will fill them. Number 4,  
11 I don't think you can overstate number 4.

12 Cumberland High School now has a state of the  
13 art science facility. I happened to come from  
14 Massachusetts, and I was reading the Globe a lot  
15 last week, they've released the scores. Science  
16 was one of the things they were discussing, and  
17 one of the biggest concerns is there are in many  
18 high schools very antiquated lab facilities.  
19 That is not the case here. We have a

20 state-of-the-art facility, and it should give  
21 our youngsters all the opportunity in the world  
22 to excel. They have what they need, and we're  
23 fortunate in that regard, because many places  
24 are dealing with outdated facilities. And if we  
25 go to science considerations, obviously, we need

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1 to spend some time, and one of the things that  
2 we first should look at, every grade has what's  
3 called a an item analysis science report. It  
4 will list every single released item of which of

5     25 percent of the test questions that the  
6     students asked, 25 percent of them will be  
7     released. We can look and see where our  
8     youngsters did well and where they appeared to  
9     fall down, and that should give us some kind of  
10    indication as to where we need to give some  
11    added attention.

12                Now, you notice in number 2 it  
13    says, review our writing expectations in  
14    science. You know what, we need to review our  
15    writing expectations in science, math, social  
16    studies. We need to review how much our  
17    youngsters are being able to write right along



18 the curriculum. I said last spring when I was  
19 reviewing the math scores that there was a  
20 reluctance on the part, particularly in high  
21 schools students, to write in mathematics. The  
22 same thing is coming out in science. There were  
23 a couple of opportunities where they have had  
24 creative respond questions, meaning the  
25 narrative opportunities, for grade 11 to write.

1 Our youngsters showed reluctance to want to  
2 perhaps answer those as completely as they

3      should. And it's not just grade 11, it's grade  
4      8 and also in grade 4, and it's not just in  
5      Cumberland, it's an area that we know we have to  
6      give some attention to in terms of expectations  
7      of writing so frequently, we ask them to do it.  
8      We need to take optimum advantage of the  
9      released item information. Now granted, this  
10     has only been given once, so we're limited in  
11     how many test items have been released.  
12     However, there's a part of it that has posted  
13     some other resource materials that folks can use  
14     in terms of guiding folks for preparation and  
15     science curriculum, so we need to look at those.

**16      As a matter of fact, that web site has**

**17      tremendous resources.**

**18                    We're considering doing perhaps a**

**19      science program evaluation where we involve a**

**20      consultant. We might want to take, for**

**21      instance, from the East Bay Collaborative and**

**22      take a look at the K through 12 direction of our**

**23      curriculum and give us an idea if are we heading**

**24      in the right direction? Do we need to tweak**

**25      some things? I think sometimes outside help can**

**1      be helpful.**

**2                      And lastly, the first year I was**

**3      here which was '06, '07 when I looked at the**

**4      high school time schedule it was clear to me**

**5      surprisingly so that science classes had the**

**6      exact same amount of time as other academic**

**7      subjects. And that's fine if all academic**

**8      subjects have at least one long block of time**

**9      that provides for lab experimentation. And what**

**10     was happening and still is, but needs to be**

**11     remedied and clearly we couldn't do it during**

**12     the construction last year, our youngsters need**

**13     more than 50 or 52 minutes to get into lab**

14 experimentation. We need to make sure that they  
15 have lab time that adequately prepares them for  
16 what they will experience in the sciences if  
17 they go on to future educational pursuits beyond  
18 high school. We haven't had that here. We need  
19 to fix that. And the way to fix it, you can do  
20 one of two things, you can say that when the  
21 science class meets, either the period before or  
22 after, will become attached to it for science  
23 lab experimentation. I can tell you quite  
24 frankly, personally, having scheduled the high  
25 school with that kind of either before or after

1 configuration for lab science, it is an  
2 absolutely nightmare in terms of how it can  
3 constrain a high school schedule. Then there  
4 are other ways of doing it. One of them is to  
5 put one long block before the school day where  
6 not only can science have an extended period of  
7 time, but other academic content areas can, as  
8 well. There are ways to do it, and not just  
9 those two ways. The high school folks need to  
10 take a look at it, because we have a  
11 state-of-the-art facility, we need to give these

12 kids adequate time to be able to take advantage  
13 of that and that somehow is going to require  
14 some kind of adjustment in terms of the schedule  
15 that is followed at the high school. And so,  
16 you know, I guess I leave you with this thought.  
17 It was the first time they took the science  
18 test. We have now established our baseline. It  
19 is as strong as the state and perhaps a little  
20 bit stronger, and I look for it to grow from  
21 there. Okay.

22 (APPLAUSE)

23 MRS. BEAULIEU: Now, did the other  
24 states take NECAPs?

1 Hampshire did.

2 MRS. BEAULIEU: Do you know what

3 their performances were?

4 MS. CARNEY: I don't know about New

5 Hampshire, but Vermont was higher than Rhode

6 Island, it would appear in science. I'm sure

7 that they're also somewhat disappointed by their

8 scores.

9 MRS. BEAULIEU: Are we required by



10        **AYP this year to have science assessments for**

11        **NECAP?**

12                **MS. MORELLE: The only subject**

13        **areas that aren't included in AYP are**

14        **mathematics, and English language arts. Whether**

15        **or not when they reauthorize, No Child Left**

16        **Behind, or however it gets decided whether**

17        **science is included, but not at this time.**

18                **MRS. BEAULIEU: Dr. Morelle, do**

19        **have responses to a parent with regard to**

20        **science course, and if I'm misstating your**

21        **comments, please correct me, but one of the**

22        **statements you had made was that there were**

23 other communities in Rhode Island that were  
24 provided with National Science Foundation Grant  
25 to improve the delivery of instruction of

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1 science. This region was not part of that, and  
2 I didn't know if you would kind of provide a  
3 little bit more of a background to that.

4 MS. MORELLE: I'd be happy to.

5 Actually, Mr. Germadnik's in the audience and  
6 we've been communicating on the biotech issues.  
7 I know that he's been following the science

8 results and commented on two of the articles  
9 that were in the Providence Journal. One of  
10 which happened to reference the exceptional  
11 science scores that the Barrington School  
12 District received, and in my response to Scott,  
13 what I referenced was that his observations  
14 about the district and their scores were  
15 accurate. The newspaper also spoke very highly  
16 about the classroom practices, but that I could  
17 also add demonetizations from my own personal  
18 experience because I have supervised programs in  
19 Barrington for almost a decade as a principal in  
20 the district is something that folks don't

21 always remember of my educational story. And at  
22 that time, I came to their district just about  
23 two or three years after the entire East Bay  
24 which is a collaborative of eight districts had  
25 received a National Science Foundation Grant, so

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1 we're talking about in the early '90s, and it  
2 was in the multi-million dollars to study  
3 science instruction in the schools, and teachers  
4 were all participating in this study. The East  
5 Bay Collaborative supervised the grant, teachers

6 took professional development on a regular  
7 basis; in fact, every classroom teacher that was  
8 a science teacher also was required to take  
9 100 hours of professional development in order  
10 to teach the science program that we have here  
11 in the district now. And I can definitely  
12 remember thinking when I came here to Cumberland  
13 again and back to the north end of the  
14 collaborative area that the depth and growth of  
15 professional development that the school  
16 district in this area were receiving as compared  
17 to the district in the East Bay couldn't really  
18 be compared, and part of it was that the various

19 collaboratives in the state had taken on  
20 different roles. East Bay Collaborative had  
21 taken on a professional development role,  
22 whereas the Northern Rhode Island Collaborative  
23 had moved into a specialized and special  
24 education, and I believe it had an impact on the  
25 school district's ability to support teachers.

1 The East Bay no longer receives funds  
2 specifically for the support of science, but it  
3 was the impetus behind developing East Bay

**4 Collaborative as a math/science collaborative**

**5 and they continue today to strongly support all**

**6 of those districts in job-embedded development,**

**7 they train coaches, and I think I've said this**

**8 to people in casual conversation, there's**

**9 absolutely no question that the district itself,**

**10 Barrington, gets some of its results, and we all**

**11 know that from the value of the social economic**

**12 status of the community, but there's also a**

**13 value added from the patterns of decision making**

**14 that are made, and also the fact that many**

**15 districts were able to afford for their teachers**

**16 and students resources that they wouldn't have**

17 had if they hadn't collaborated. I do think  
18 that Cumberland and other districts in Northern  
19 Rhode Island probably are not in similarly  
20 situated situations that some of the other  
21 districts are.

22 MR. WAGNER: Anyone else?

23 MR. WOOD: I had a question  
24 for Dr. Carney. Just to go back to the results,  
25 and I see where we loop together the level fours

1 and level threes, but actually you do the same



2      **thing with level twos and level ones, which**  
3      **means they fell below proficiency, that would**  
4      **mean this year's senior class we had 82 percent**  
5      **of our students below proficiency?**

6               **MS. CARNEY: That's right. Because**  
7      **if you compare three and four, if you have 18**  
8      **percent, so you're absolutely right.**

9               **MR. WOOD: So that's this year's**  
10     **graduating class?**

11             **MS. CARNEY: Last year's juniors,**  
12     **right.**

13             **MR. WAGNER: The next item on the**  
14     **agenda is the Superintendent's Report on**

15      **Teaching and Learning.**

16                    **MS. MORELLE: Thank you, Mr.**

17      **Wagner. Actually, I've already commented on a**

18      **couple of the things between the report that you**

19      **just heard about the NECAP results and also**

20      **picking up on Mr. Wood's comments earlier about**

21      **the rededication. I would like to point out to**

22      **you that I've added another piece to the report**

23      **this week, and that is to add a section of,**

24      **which I guess you can call it a glossary, and**

25      **I'd like to ask for your input on the kinds of**

**1 things that you'd like some information on the**

**2 educational terms that I provided some**

**3 background to you this week with my**

**4 differentiating instruction. And the reason**

**5 that I thought it would be valuable that we**

**6 spend some time in the communication that I**

**7 provided to you that we need so much educational**

**8 jargon unless we have a common definition of**

**9 what we're talking about than we use our**

**10 personal definition, and we could spend most of**

**11 our time debating the definition, rather than**

**12 figuring out what we're going to do in terms of**

13 an application. I see that happen a lot, and I  
14 think sometimes we call that a communication  
15 problem, so I'm trying to see if I can't help  
16 around the communication issues by identifying  
17 with you some of the educational concepts and  
18 areas that perhaps we're working on together.  
19 I've already worked on the report for next time,  
20 and it will be in the area of response to  
21 intervention, and what I thought I would do is  
22 when I give the report, a little update on that,  
23 or I could actually take a copy of that piece  
24 and provide it to audience members if you think  
25 that would be appropriate. And just for those

1 folks in the audience, it talks about  
2 differentiating instruction a lot and  
3 differentiating instruction is a practice where  
4 teachers use either grouping strategies or  
5 materials or products in the classroom to ensure  
6 that the range of learners in the classrooms are  
7 having their needs met. They preassess to  
8 determine where students are in relation to the  
9 standards that students need to meet. Based on  
10 the preassessment information, they provide

11 instruction in that instructional design

12 process. That's how they decide what the small

13 groups or flexible groups will be in the

14 classroom. Sometimes those flexible groups are

15 small so we'll use different material, they may

16 work at a different pace, and each of those

17 decisions points are points that they make using

18 their professional judgment in training, and

19 then the goal is that every student in the class

20 achieve the same standard, and oftentimes what

21 would happen previously before the concept of

22 differentiated instruction was really clearly

23 understood in the classroom, was that we would

24 change the standard. So we wouldn't necessarily  
25 preassess, we wouldn't give credit, so to speak

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1 for the knowledge that students had, and for  
2 those students who may not have met a standard,  
3 such as what you saw tonight on a NECAP of  
4 results on partially proficiency in an area, we  
5 would allow that partial proficiency to get in  
6 their way of mastering the same goal. And  
7 obviously if you see what would happen over time  
8 from one grade to the next, those students

9      become immediately deficient in their knowledge  
10     and after two or three years they have no chance  
11     of catching up. So really differentiating  
12     instruction is a way of making sure that all  
13     students do master challenging content, and the  
14     concept of differentiated instruction actually  
15     comes out of gifted education, and we're very  
16     fortunate to have the gifted NYS University of  
17     Connecticut which is like a stone's throw from  
18     our backyard. If you were in California, you  
19     would die to be in Rhode Island, and they access  
20     to such a resource so close that I think we take  
21     for granted that this center is so close to us



22 at the University of Connecticut because of all  
23 the current research on gifted ed and  
24 differentiation of instruction is actually being  
25 developed right here at the University of

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1 Connecticut, and we get a lot of updated  
2 professional development as a result of that,  
3 and a lot of teacher training as a result of  
4 that, and we hope to continue to implement the  
5 practice of differentiating instruction in our  
6 classrooms in the future.

7                   **MR. WAGNER:** Next item on the  
8   **agenda is Comments From the Public. Mr.**  
9   **Rotella?**

10               **The first one on here is Scott**  
11   **Germadnik, 7 Aurora Drive.**

12               **MR. GERMADNIK:** Just to address  
13   **what Dr. Morelle had just mentioned earlier, the**  
14   **science foundation grants. When something that**  
15   **they sought should happen to fall into their**  
16   **laps, and I think we need, as a community, to do**  
17   **a lot more of that. These things aren't just**  
18   **going to come to us, we've got to go find them,**  
19   **they're out there. It may not be publicized,**

20 but they are there, we need to find them and use  
21 them. They're great resources if we can get our  
22 hands on. But we've got to do the legwork,  
23 they're not going to come find us. And  
24 hopefully I've started to dig into that, a ball  
25 rolling, that we can move forward with that will

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1 provide some help, not just in the science area,  
2 but also in mathematics with the State of Rhode  
3 Island. And when they're networking to go to  
4 those types of organizations, who knows what

5 else might come out of that. But if we don't do  
6 anything, we're not going to know what if.  
7 We've got to go look for these things. They  
8 have the East Bay Collaborative, who knows, two,  
9 three, four years down the road we may have a  
10 Blackstone Valley Collaborative that starts out  
11 with something like this where we're sharing  
12 technology from different industries all over  
13 the northern part of Rhode Island. They're out  
14 there, you've got to go find them, there's a lot  
15 of pharmaceutical engineering technology  
16 math-driven businesses in the area that people  
17 drive by every day and have no idea what's

18      behind that brick building over there. Their  
19      children don't know what's there. A lot of us  
20      want our kids to stay when they get out of  
21      school. There's nothing for them to stay here,  
22      they think. They drive by it every day, they  
23      don't know what it is. Times have changed, but  
24      the mindset hasn't. We've got to change the  
25      mindset. You're not just going to get out of

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1      school and go do what two generations had done  
2      before. It's not there. You've got to go find

3      them. The science scores on the NECAP. A lot  
4      of questions came to my mind. I'd like to see  
5      if I can get some of them answered, some of may  
6      be better left unanswered for now. I find it  
7      hard to believe that we didn't know the test was  
8      coming. I'd like to think that we had an idea  
9      of what the content, appropriate content was  
10     going to be on the exam. Did we even look to  
11     see where our current curriculum fell with those  
12     expectations on the NECAP? I know we're going  
13     to do it now, but did we do it before? I'd like  
14     to think it was. One of my comments that I  
15     wanted to mention later was there's a lot of

16      generalization. I've been here now three  
17      months, consistently. I hear threats of action  
18      on things that come up with various areas,  
19      they're always very vague, very general in  
20      nature, very few concrete benchmarks that we  
21      need to achieve and very little so far, it's  
22      been only three months so I may be wrong, if I  
23      am please tell me I'm way off base, but very  
24      little progress trend analysis as to what we're  
25      doing to achieve those. You've got benchmarks.

**1     We need to see where we're at and measure up**

**2     against those. They need to be concrete. They**

**3     can't be, oh, most of the kids seem to like it.**

**4     They can't be a few more did better this time**

**5     around. There's got to be goals that we can**

**6     measure, or the goals are useless. You can't**

**7     measure them. If you don't figure out what**

**8     you're doing, they don't serve a purpose other**

**9     than throwing a piece of paper saying the**

**10    requirement we established won't work. And that**

**11    to me doesn't make any sense. There's resources**

**12    out there. We've got to use them. We can**

**13    improve the schools. And it's disheartening to**



14 see the same people, that is good, but the same  
15 number of people, I should say, at these  
16 meetings every two weeks, every month. They  
17 only show up when they feel disgruntled. We've  
18 got to change it. To me, 80 percent of what we  
19 do here on that table and this table is pretty  
20 black and white. It's making the schools  
21 better. There's no right way or wrong way. You  
22 sit down, you talk about the idea, there's pros  
23 and cons, is it worth pursuing or is it worth  
24 saving it for later. There should be no, my  
25 idea is better just because, or this idea is no

1     **good just because it came from this place. If**  
2     **it works and you can substantiate why, then it**  
3     **needs to be looked at. Again, if the goals**  
4     **aren't concrete or measurable, what good are**  
5     **they. The actions have to be concrete, or**  
6     **they're useless. We've got to start looking for**  
7     **benchmarks. We can achieve, set realistic**  
8     **goals, don't set false expectations, and then go**  
9     **get them and set the next one and measure it**  
10    **accordingly. If that mindset is there when the**  
11    **parents leave, the kids are going to see it.**

12      You've got to start getting the parents involved  
13      in one way, shape, or form. It might take  
14      parents to help do that. Little by little, I'd  
15      like to see that happen. Hopefully we can get  
16      there. Thank you.

17              MR. WAGNER: Thank you. The next  
18      person up is Brian Pearson, 1427 Diamond Hill  
19      Road.

20              MR. PEARSON: Thank you, Mr.  
21      Chairman. I wanted to come up here basically to  
22      talk to the four members who had voted  
23      consistent with the renewal of all contracts.  
24      And the door is open on this. Mrs. Beaulieu

**25      made a comment. One of the things that drives**

**73**

**1      our decision is data, so one of the things that**  
**2      I wanted to bring up was the data. I've poured**  
**3      through loads of data today, and really trying**  
**4      to come up with what I saw as some of the things**  
**5      we need to do, some places we need to go. And**  
**6      the facts published by the Rhode Island**  
**7      Department of Education have made it clear.**  
**8      Cumberland is a suburban district, it's not**  
**9      performing the way it should be. We're the only**

10 suburban district within the entire state with  
11 more than three additional public schools not  
12 making AYP. Of the eight schools in Rhode  
13 Island that have less than 10 percent poverty,  
14 eight in the whole state, three in Cumberland.  
15 This is disheartening for me and I'm sure to the  
16 many members here, and we hear a lot of  
17 presentation where we're moving and where our  
18 scores are going. But these are the facts, and  
19 we know they're from the Department of Education  
20 they're from my test scores. We have another  
21 academic called the value-added indicator. And  
22 this added indicator compares our students

23 district by district, school by school to  
24 students across the state who are like them  
25 demographically and in theory, our numbers, our

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1 test scores should be at the AI number. If  
2 they're above we're overperforming, if they're  
3 under we're obviously underperforming. And if  
4 they're there we're on track. All Cumberland  
5 schools are below to the AI in writing. All but  
6 one are below in math, all but two are below in  
7 reading. It's unbelievable. No other suburban

8 district in the state underperforms to this  
9 degree, not even close. If you want to look at  
10 each school, let's look at B.F. Norton. They  
11 dropped in math, where only one-third of  
12 students are now proficient. Reading and  
13 writing, they did great, but they're still below  
14 the 50 percent mark, and there's a 20 percent  
15 achievement gap between poor and nonpoor  
16 students at B.F. Norton. Ashton scores dropped  
17 in all three test areas are below 50 percent in  
18 math and writing. Ashton's achievement gap  
19 between poor and nonpoor, 48 percent in math and  
20 reading. Garvin dropped in reading 62 percent

21 and plummeted in writing by 22 percent over one  
22 year. That's at Garvin School. Cumberland Hill  
23 scores dropped in all three areas, Community  
24 they remained our strongest, but right about  
25 average in comparison to other schools around

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1 the state. McCourt Middle was up very slightly  
2 in the last years, went down in math and  
3 writing. It has many of the achievement scores  
4 that we saw or seen before was for a poor and  
5 non-poor students. And again, below in all



6 subjects. North Cumberland Middle, down in  
7 math, down in reading, down in writing. Are you  
8 seeing a trend? As mentioned, all of these are  
9 below to the AI in each individual subject.  
10 This goes across the board, across the state.  
11 And how do I relate the facts of the contract  
12 negotiation? We need to have accountability,  
13 and as Mrs. Beaulieu said, we drive our  
14 decisions by data. This is the data, this is  
15 the data from the Department of Education, and  
16 presented in the back that I think is accurate,  
17 and I hope that you just understand this data  
18 and take this data, see it, and come back. Yes,

**19 I am a candidate for this board, but it's**

**20 40 days between now and the next school**

**21 committee. Why do these contracts need to be**

**22 rushed and done within the next 40 days? Has**

**23 this data been looked at by school by school?**

**24 Have the evaluations for each administrator been**

**25 reviewed by the school committee? I remember**

**76**

**1 Mr. Costa, just a few weeks ago, asked for the**

**2 evaluations. He was denied those evaluations,**

**3 so I don't understand how can they can be making**

4      these votes to approve their contracts when we  
5      don't know the data and we don't know all the  
6      facts. And even as school committee members,  
7      from what I can see don't have all the data,  
8      don't have all the facts. So I urge you as we  
9      continue through this contract, we have done  
10     basically all of them at this point, but I urge  
11     you as we continue, I urge you to look back at  
12     your prior decision, I wish that two of the  
13     people here that voted for this were here not to  
14     hear this, but I guess their time is up for this  
15     evening, and that's all they're going to get.  
16     So take the facts, and I thank you for your

17      attention, I thank you for your hospitality, and  
18      hopefully we can make some progress on this.  
19      Thank you.

20                      (APPLAUSE)

21                      MR. WAGNER: Thank you.

22                      Bill Millette, 54 Bishop Drive.

23      I'm a parent of two students at Community School  
24      and I attended last spring's meeting on the math  
25      investigations program, and one of the issues I

1      raised at that meeting was the availability of

2 on-line resources to support the math  
3 investigation program. And at that time  
4 Dr. Morelle said that we should look into the  
5 resources available to the Cumberland Schools.  
6 And I'm glad to learn that those resources are,  
7 in fact have been purchased. I am, however,  
8 extremely disappointed with the current  
9 availability of those resources to our students.  
10 As it stands right now, my second grader has  
11 access to those resources, but my fifth grader  
12 does not. Those resources include an on-line  
13 version of the student math handbook that helps  
14 parents understand what their children are

15      learning and makes it easier for them to help  
16      children with their homework. I attended last  
17      night's family math meeting, and again, inquired  
18      about the on-line access of those materials, and  
19      Dr. Carney stated that a whole bunch of training  
20      had to take place before they'd be available and  
21      it might be the end of November before all of  
22      the students had access to those materials. To  
23      me, for an administration that supports the  
24      students 100 percent of the time, wasting  
25      one-third of the school for making those

**1 resources that were obviously made for with**

**2 taxpayers' funds available is unacceptable. I**

**3 think that you had a chance to be heroes and you**

**4 let it slip through your fingers. You need to**

**5 do a much better job and not wait until the end**

**6 to make those resources available. They need to**

**7 be made available as soon as possible. And if**

**8 it takes putting this administrative person to**

**9 work on it rather than teaching every single**

**10 teacher how to do this, logging and passwords**

**11 are not difficult tasks. It should be done**

**12 before the end of November, our students deserve**

13 it, and taxpayers deserve it.

14 MS. MORELLE: Sir, we did hear the  
15 concerns last night and we've been moving  
16 expeditiously as we can on it. And I want you  
17 to understand that what you said last night did  
18 not fall on deaf ears, nor did it fall through  
19 anyone's fingers.

20 MR. WAGNER: Thank you. I'm going  
21 to guess that this is Jerry McLaughlin.

22 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: I'd like to  
23 reiterate some of the things that were set forth  
24 here tonight that I'm in total disagreement  
25 with. Ms. Beaulieu spoke about cohesion and how



1     we have to have it in reference to contracts.

2     Basically, you know, I look at the minority that

3     sits here tonight and the majority that made

4     that vote. It was ludicrous. Basic things that

5     were not even looked at, other districts, how

6     they vote. You know six months before, how can

7     you evaluate a person and make a determination.

8     It's job performance, I'm looking, you've got

9     good people for the most part, but what I'm

10    basically saying is what kind of incentive, what

11 kind of a message are you sending to these  
12 people. What kind of incentive does that give  
13 them for motivation in achieving their goals?  
14 And I just wanted to bring that forward tonight  
15 because I think it was a wrong thing. Even on  
16 performance evaluations. How can you grant  
17 people pay raises when you don't even have  
18 access to their evaluation material? So with  
19 that said, I don't think it should have happened  
20 tonight, period.

21 MR. WAGNER: Thanks, Jim. That  
22 does it for comments from the public. We have  
23 School Committee Comments, that would be the

24      **School Liaison Report. Mr. Wood, do you have**  
25      **anything?**

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1              **MR. WOOD: No, not at this time.**

2              **MRS. BEAULIEU: Can I make school**  
3      **committee comments now?**

4              **MR. WAGNER: While I appreciate all**  
5      **the comments tonight, the first one I wanted to**  
6      **respond to was just the reminder that B.F.**

7      **Norton is looking for a commitment of the**  
8      **community for two hours of volunteer time. So**

9 if you have the opportunity, there are a number  
10 of different programs at B. F. Norton that can  
11 accommodate individuals participating, whether  
12 it's after-school programs or enrichment  
13 programs, and Paula Maloney is the principal  
14 there. To Mr. Germadnik, we've talked about  
15 test score data, and many times we talked about  
16 them at the curriculum subcommittee meeting.

17 You may also want to attend your school  
18 improvement team meetings because what you see  
19 in the display is a pretty high-end report of  
20 the district data. What you'll see in the  
21 school improvement team report, and that's

22 really limited to the team members, is they're  
23 beginning to analyze where we missed targets.  
24 And Dr. Carney spoke of it in the past where  
25 she'll say, there are times when you can't test

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1 children on data they've never seen and that's  
2 very evident in that report data that you  
3 received from your NECAP. We also talk about it  
4 in the district level and the Special  
5 Educational Program evaluation is something that  
6 we spoke of at the last curriculum subcommittee

7 meeting where we spoke of why certain students  
8 weren't doing well in certain target areas and  
9 what we were doing as a district at a variety of  
10 levels in an effort to remedy that. And then  
11 lastly, one of the discussions was about, do we  
12 ever monitor our progress within our classes?  
13 And I know at the high school level they have  
14 end of course assessments, and that's part of  
15 their graduation requirements for our students,  
16 but what we've also participated in as a  
17 district is the understanding of the scope of  
18 the sequence for all the grade level  
19 expectations as they relate to our schools, and,

20 again, what was reported at the curriculum  
21 subcommittee meeting was there are gaps, and  
22 what the district is doing is attempting to  
23 remedy those gaps. They're doing it across all  
24 the grade levels. When they realized there's so  
25 much duplicity of certain level expectations,

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1 they then try to identify expectations in, let's  
2 say, English, language, art or science that  
3 aren't covered as often as some of the other  
4 requirements. So they are making an effort to

5      ensure that we are covering those expectations  
6      for all students as they're defined by the  
7      Department of Education. So I think what you  
8      see is the top level. If we got down into the  
9      nitty-gritty, it's probably best to see it in  
10     your school improvement team, it's also great to  
11     see it at the curriculum subcommittee meeting  
12     because there are times when we talk about  
13     specific targets of data. I also wanted to  
14     provide a small recognition to a couple of  
15     schools. We had talked about AYP a couple of  
16     weeks ago, and what I think the perception that  
17     everyone had leaving the meeting was that we



18 just failed AYP, but there were some schools  
19 that were actually more successful in previous  
20 years, and Cumberland Hill was one that kind of  
21 popped out for me, and I don't know what data  
22 you were looking at but, and maybe we can have  
23 coffee and talk data, but what I understood what  
24 that between last year and this year Cumberland  
25 Hill had some pretty sizable improvements on

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1 some of their test score data. I think it needs  
2 to be recognized as an achievement. It is hard

3      when you don't get the overall classification,  
4      but the majority of the schools for their  
5      aggregate scores did make AYP, but they missed  
6      it in the subgroups. We talk a lot about the  
7      subgroups in the special education discussion  
8      that we had last week as to what practices we  
9      were putting in place, have put in place, some  
10     of the realization is where we were five years  
11     ago compared to other school districts, and what  
12     resources we had and what commitments or  
13     decisions we made. And I said it before, we  
14     have to live with the decisions that our  
15     predecessors made, and sometimes they were based

16 on budget, sometimes they were based on fact,  
17 sometimes we didn't have the data available to  
18 us. And even now we talked about it again with  
19 the special education group about having the  
20 greater ability to utilize our data and have it  
21 accessible to us, and the state has been  
22 developing a data warehouse, and the data  
23 warehouse was to be released a year ago. It is  
24 not completed, and that does limit our  
25 accessibility to data in a manipulative format

**1      so it will provide us the ability to extract the**

**2      data we need for our district. Other states**

**3      have access to data warehouses, and if you read**

**4      the special education program report, one of the**

**5      comments was that we needed to have better**

**6      access to our data in order to make long-term**

**7      decisions for our students. And to comment with**

**8      regard to the value-added scores, the value**

**9      added scores are always something that I find**

**10     truly fascinating and I've been following them**

**11     for a number of years. We follow them in more**

**12     than 16 categories, and what happened this year**

**13     was that the bar was raised for our test score**

14 expectations, and with regard to the students  
15 with disabilities we struggled to make that. If  
16 you look over the long run, our value added data  
17 has taken some interesting paths, and last year,  
18 the previous year our AYP said our value added  
19 data was really starting to climb, and we had a  
20 number of schools in the higher-end bracket. So  
21 I respect your interest in that because that was  
22 always something that I found was a topic talked  
23 about of the students in the districts and how  
24 they performed. Yes, we have struggled from  
25 last year to this year. If you look at last

1     year's scores, we are basing our decision for  
2     the following years on the data that we received  
3     from the state. I also wanted to comment, and I  
4     hope I don't have a five-minute rule, the  
5     discussion of contracts didn't just come out of  
6     personnel, it was discussed with ideas supported  
7     by the committee in 2005, and it's been  
8     continuing through now. And I think Mr.  
9     Germadnik said we need to change the mind set.  
10    The national information does talk about  
11    continuity of district and expectations for the

12 district. We do need to change the mindset  
13 because I believe schools need to be run like  
14 businesses, and when we establish a strategic  
15 plan, whether it be a three or five-year plan,  
16 it drives the direction of the district. It's  
17 hard when they're in the gap like a loss of a  
18 administrator or an individual of personnel, and  
19 if you take it from that model and you  
20 understand that clearly the Board of Directors  
21 can change every two years, you need to invest  
22 the time. We now have the ingredients. We have  
23 a lot of data that shows us the direction our  
24 district needs to be. What our weaknesses are,

**25      we've done that Dunn, we've done it through**

**86**

**1      NECAP, we've done it through the special**  
**2      educational program evaluation. We now have the**  
**3      facilities. The ingredients are there. It's**  
**4      our responsibility to ensure that that happens.**  
**5      One of the other comments is that we would be**  
**6      handcuffing a committee. And I thought a lot**  
**7      about that. I think coming onto this committee**  
**8      as a freshman member, I could have said that the**  
**9      PTA'S contract was handcuffed because I was not**



10      able to negotiate it. But I have to have the  
11      faith that when our contract was negotiated, it  
12      was done in the best interest of improving  
13      student learning, and I think the same regard  
14      was put to this type of decision for these  
15      contracts. I also have to say that this  
16      committee has had to tackle some pretty  
17      substantial discussions with regard to  
18      renegotiate a health care contract. That was a  
19      big adventure for us, and it was successful, and  
20      we were able to maintain the health care for our  
21      staff. We did listen to them, but it was also a  
22      substantial savings for the district. We

23      successfully negotiated the ICSE contract. One  
24      of the particular concerns that we had in that  
25      was a raise for teacher assistants. We

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1      supported a four-year partnership with the Dunn  
2      Foundation. That's a big, long duration there.  
3      We finally hired a K-8 district level math  
4      coordinator that will help with that discussion  
5      of our math scores and a K-8 literacy  
6      coordinator. We didn't have that a couple of  
7      years ago, and it was a discussion that we felt

8      important and critical of improving the  
9      district. And the special educational program  
10     evaluations, I think, provided a lot of  
11     information, very relative and important  
12     information for the students with special needs.  
13     So regardless of the fact that you can yell from  
14     the back of the room, I think it's insulting. I  
15     prefer you to come up to the microphone. I  
16     think we do make decisions that are based on  
17     data. It is hard when the data varies from year  
18     to year, but I do think a lot of us have put  
19     some thought into it, and if you would like to  
20     learn more about the data, I invite you to come

21 to the curriculum subcommittee meeting because  
22 that's where a lot of the discussions occurs.  
23 Thank you.

24 MR. WAGNER: Karen?

25 MRS. MACBETH: I have two things.

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1 First, the superintendent had asked for some  
2 feedback on the Superintendent's Report of  
3 teaching and learning, and I think Mr. Millette  
4 brought something that I would like to have  
5 brought up in the future and where we stand on

6      that investigation and the password and if we  
7      can have an update on that periodically to keep  
8      the committee informed. The last thing that I  
9      have is, we met in executive session on  
10     grievances. Are we going to be taking a vote on  
11     that?

12                MR. WAGNER: Not tonight. Anything  
13     else?

14                MR. WOOD: All set.

15                MR. WAGNER: I guess I'll be last,  
16     and I won't take very long. I do appreciate  
17     that Lisa had a lot to say, but there have been  
18     over the last several meetings a lot of

19 questions that were asked. We should be at  
20 liberty to give you some answers, at least as  
21 far as what she understood. Mr. Millette, I  
22 thank you for coming in. I can tell you that  
23 I'm sure we'll be taking a look at that math  
24 investigation and making sure that that is up  
25 and running as quick as possible. A sad state

1 to go on with that would be that you are the  
2 only one here to complain about it. And that  
3 kind of leads to the one thing that I do believe

4 is probably the most important thing we need  
5 going forward. We're at a point now in our  
6 education, it's not Cumberland, it's  
7 everywhere. Those of you who are here, I  
8 commend you for being here, those who are  
9 running are running for office, I commend you  
10 for that, as well. That means you care. It's  
11 going to take more than just those of us who  
12 care, the few of us who are here. We need the  
13 parents' input, we need the kids' input, we need  
14 the administration input, we need people from  
15 outside the district and people from outside to  
16 come in with their fresh ideas. Mr. Germadnik,

17     you're a breath of fresh air when you come to  
18     the microphone. I appreciate your input. I  
19     believe it's time regardless of the direction of  
20     the members of the next committee, I think it's  
21     imperative going into our next CTA contract that  
22     we have some serious direction with regards to  
23     the things we're going to look at and how it is  
24     we're going to direct our schools. The union  
25     members that we have, CTA and our ICSE members

1     are a vital part, as our administrators. As to



2     our parents, we all need to be on board, we all  
3     need to be involved, and we need to stop chasing  
4     each other around and start getting each other  
5     into a room so we can have those discussions  
6     that need to be had. There are some tough  
7     choices, there are some hard choices. There are  
8     some changes that need to be made.  
9     Mrs. MacBeth, I can speak -- I'm sure everybody  
10    in this room, we are all counting on you to help  
11    us with the fairness issues in regards to the  
12    funding for this district. That is certainly  
13    one of the things that handicaps us  
14    significantly being able to offer the things we

15        need to be able to offer. Thank you, very much.

16                    With that, I don't believe we have

17        any executive session, so I would like to

18        entertain a motion to adjourn.

19                    MR. COSTA: So moved.

20                    MRS. MACBETH: Second.

21                    (HEARING CLOSED AT 10:35 P.M.)

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23 OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES – Approved by Cumberland  
School  
Committee 10.23.08

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1                   **C-E-R-T-I-F-I-C-A-T-E**

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3                   **I, PAULA J. CAMPAGNA, CSR, a Notary**  
4                   **Public, do hereby certify that the foregoing is**  
5                   **a true, accurate, and complete transcript of my**  
6                   **notes taken at the above-entitled hearing.**

7

8                   **IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my**  
9                   **hand this 16th day of October, 2008.**

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12      **PAULA J. CAMPAGNA, CSR, NOTARY PUBLIC/CERTIFIED**  
13      **COURT REPORTER**

13

**MY COMMISSION EXPIRES: March 30, 2010**

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**IN RE: School Committee Town of Cumberland**

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**DATE: September 25, 2008**

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**Allied Court Reporters (401) 946-5500**